

Information for Suction Dredge Permit Applicants

Please use the application form on the previous web page to obtain an authorization to discharge wastewater from a suction dredge into state waters under the Montana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (MPDES) program. A discharge permit is required prior to the discharge of wastewater from a suction dredge into any state surface water. Discharge without a permit is a violation of the Montana Water Quality Act and may result in a substantial fine.

The Department estimates that a permit can be issued within 30 days of receipt of a completed application. To meet this timetable, it is important that you provide all of the information requested in the application. The Department will use this information to determine the appropriate conditions in the permit to protect fish and associated aquatic life and to safeguard other beneficial uses of state waters.

In addition to the MPDES permit, other permits or authorizations may be required. For your information, we have included a list of agencies that issue these permits. It is your responsibility to contact these agencies directly.

This permit is only valid for recreational suction dredges less than four (4) inches in diameter. Suction dredges that are greater than four inches in diameter require an individual MPDES permit and a separate application form. Processing time for such permits is 180 days. If all of the material discharged from your suction dredge are deposited in an upland site and not returned to any surface water, including lakes, ponds, streams, rivers, marshes and irrigation canals that return to state waters, an MPDES discharge permit from the DEQ is not required. You will, however, still need to contact the other agencies in regard to their permitting requirements.

Effective April 23, 2003 new fees for suction dredges operating in Montana are as follows:

Application fee:

\$25 if it is owned and operated by a resident of Montana

\$100 if it is owned and operated by a nonresident of Montana

Annual fee:

\$25 if it is owned and operated by a resident of Montana

\$100 if it is owned and operated by a nonresident of Montana

Both the application fee and first year annual fee are required to be submitted with the application. For example, the total first year fee for a resident is \$50 and \$25 each year thereafter. The total first year fee for a nonresident is \$200 and \$100 each year thereafter.

If you have questions or need more information, please contact John Wadhams in the Water Protection Bureau at (406) 444-2783 or e-mail him at jwadhams@state.mt.us.